

Application Number. : 09/997,392
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Draft of Proposed Amendments for Claims 1, 3, 9, 16, 18, and 25 are for Discussion Purposes Only

1. (Currently Amended) A slot machine comprising:
a plurality of reels, each of the reels comprising a reel strip bearing a plurality of different discrete symbols and a continuous graphical element extending between adjacent ones of the discrete symbols such that the discrete symbols are thematically unified by the graphical element;
a processor operable to rotate the reels and stop the reels to place the discrete symbols on the reels in visual association with a display area, and to award a base game payout responsive to an alignment of a plurality of discrete symbols associated with a winning combination along a selected payline,
wherein at least one of said reels comprises a video reel and wherein said processor is operable to, for said at least one of said reels, move a selected one of said discrete symbols relative to said continuous graphical element and determine an award, said award being related to a degree of said movement and being independent of any payline.

3. (Currently Amended) The slot machine of claim 1, wherein ~~at least one of said reels comprises a video reel and wherein said processor is operable to, for said at least one of said reels, move a selected one of said discrete symbols relative to said continuous graphical element~~ wherein said processor is operable to, for said at least one of said reels, move the selected one of said discrete symbols relative to said continuous graphical element and determine, during for a bonus game, an award being related to a degree of said movement and being independent of any payline.

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